

Robert Bee Obituary

Robert Bee

Heavens Above



It was with great sadness that MAS President, John Rombi, announced today that one of our founding members, a great friend and a passionate astronomer, Bob Bee has passed. Bob's DNA is written all over MAS and we are broken-hearted to lose him. He played such a huge part in establishing the Society. 1996 seems such a long time ago!

He joined the inaugural MAS Management Committee in February 1996 - one month after the Society was founded - and remained until he concluded a year as Secretary in 2008. He was one of a small leadership group which guided the embryonic MAS towards being the great Society which it is today.

Bob never stopped talking about astronomy. He never stopped writing about it either.

He was an accomplished astronomy communicator and an impressive ambassador for MAS, giving astronomy talks to the many community groups which asked him. He always excelled at public nights, where his voice could often be overheard explaining intricate information to an enthralled audience.

He was editor of MAS "Prime Focus" magazine - almost single-handedly writing, editing and publishing monthly editions from 1996 before handing over the reins in 2007.

Bob's regular column, "[Heavens Above](#)", for the Macarthur Chronicle inspired many in the Macarthur region to look up at the night sky - and attracted some to also join MAS. When the Chronicle ceased publishing "Heavens Above" after more than a decade, Bob persuaded the Macarthur Advertiser to publish instead.

Our website section for members articles is dominated by Bob, who contributed an astonishing ninety [articles](#) and [short stories](#), many of which have received thousands of hits. They will continue to be available to members and the public for a long time to come.

He authored [two amateur astronomy books and at least one children's story book](#). His first book, also called "Heavens Above" is out of print and his second work, "Star Hopping to the Messiers" is nearly sold out.

The last time I met Bob was at the February Forum with Fred Watson - the last Forum held before covid came along - and there was clearly something wrong. That night he handed me his entire collection of Prime Focus magazine to archive on behalf of the Society. It was distressing to learn a few weeks later that he had terminal illness.

He joined us for the last time at the online Forum in June. The news that Bob had died on 3rd August has saddened his many, many friends here at MAS. I am informed that our great friend died peacefully and painlessly overnight at home. He will be fondly

remembered by us all. All members will offer their love & support for Marion (Bob's wife) and his children & family.

"Heavens Above" - that was the name used by Bob for his newspaper columns and also his first astronomy book.

We'll all miss him down here.

John will inform you when funeral arrangements are known.

Roger Powell

Webmaster

3rd August 2020

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